Amendments to the Specification

Please replace each indicated paragraph with its following, respective rewritten paragraph:

The paragraph that immediately follows the title.

A1

This application claims ~~priority from~~ the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/297000 filed June 8, 2001, and U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/315257 filed August 27, 2001.

The paragraph beginning at page 2, line 12:

A2

~~The present inventors have recognized the deficiencies~~ Deficiencies and problems inherent in the prior art have been recognized and in response thereto, ~~conducted~~ intensive research has been conducted in developing the innovative labial pads of the present invention. ~~The inventors have~~ It has been discovered that absorbent articles such as labial pads having well-defined lengths, widths and surface areas mitigate the likelihood that the absorbent article will become dislodged from the vestibule during use or provide less than adequate protection from leakage.

The paragraph beginning at page 5, line 15:

A3

The absorbent article (40), an embodiment of which is illustrated in FIG. 3, has a principal longitudinal axis (L) which generally runs along the x direction. As used herein, the term "longitudinal" refers to a line, axis or direction in the plane of the absorbent article (40) that is generally aligned with (*e.g.*, approximately parallel to) a vertical plane that bisects a standing female wearer into left and right body halves when the absorbent article is in use. The longitudinal direction is generally illustrated in FIG. 3 by the x-axis. The absorbent article (40) also has a principal transverse axis (T). The terms "transverse," "lateral" or "y direction" as used herein generally refer to a line, axis or direction that is generally perpendicular to the longitudinal direction. The lateral direction is generally illustrated in FIG. 3 by the y-axis. The "z direction" is typically a line, axis or direction generally parallel to the vertical plane described above. The z direction is generally illustrated in FIG. 4 by the z-axis, Z-Z. The term "upper" refers generally to an orientation directed toward the wearer's head, while the terms "lower" or "downwardly" refer generally to an orientation directed toward the wearer's feet. For purposes of discussion herein, each layer of the absorbent article (40), *e.g.*, a fluid permeable cover (62), a liquid impermeable baffle (64) and/or an absorbent (66), has an upper or body-facing surface and a lower surface also described as the surface opposed to the upper or body-facing surface.

The paragraph beginning at page 10, line 1:

A4

The absorbent (66) also desirably has a basis weight of less than about 600 grams per square meter (gsm). Stated differently, the absorbent (66) typically has a maximum basis weight of no greater than about 600; alternatively, no greater than about 500; alternatively, no greater than about 400; alternatively, no greater than about 300; alternatively, no greater than about 200; or alternatively, no greater than about 100 gsm. Generally, the absorbent (66) also has a minimum basis weight of typically no less than about 0.1; alternatively, no less than about 50; alternatively, no less than about 100; alternatively, no less than about 150; alternatively, no less than about 200; alternatively, no less than about 250; alternatively, no less than about 300; alternatively, no less than about 350; alternatively, no less than about 400; alternatively, no less than about 450; alternatively, no less than about 500; or alternatively, no less than about 550 gsm. Thus, the absorbent (66) may have a basis weight of about 600 gsm or less; although the approximate basis weight of the absorbent may vary according to, *inter alia*, the general design and intended disposition of the absorbent article (40) within the vestibule (42) of a female wearer. A specific example of a suitable absorbent would be similar to a coform material made of a blend of polypropylene and cellulose fibers and used in [[KOTEX®]] KOTEX maxi pantiliners and obtainable from Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Neenah, WI, USA.

The paragraph beginning at page 10, line 26:

A5

The baffle (64) may be maintained in secured relation with the absorbent (66) by bonding all or a portion of the adjacent surfaces to one another. A variety of bonding methods known to one of skill in the art may be utilized to achieve any such secured relation. Examples of such methods include, but are not limited to, ultrasonics, thermal bonding, or the application of adhesives in a variety of patterns between the two adjoining surfaces. A specific example of a baffle material would be similar to a polyethylene film used on [[KOTEX®]] KOTEX pantiliners and obtainable from Pliant Corporation, Schaumburg, IL, USA.

The paragraph beginning at page 11, line 5:

A6

The cover (62) is provided for comfort and conformability and functions to direct bodily exudate(s) away from the body and toward the absorbent (66). The cover (62) should retain little or no liquid in its structure so that it provides a relatively comfortable and non-irritating surface next to the tissues within the vestibule (42) of a female wearer. The cover (62) can be constructed of any woven or nonwoven material which is also easily penetrated by bodily fluids contacting its surface. Examples of suitable materials include rayon, bonded

carded webs of polyester, polypropylene, polyethylene, nylon, or other heat-bondable fibers, polyolefins, such as copolymers of polypropylene and polyethylene, linear low-density polyethylene, aliphatic esters such as polylactic acid, finely perforated film webs and net material also work well. A specific example of a suitable cover material would be similar to a bonded carded web made of polypropylene and polyethylene used as a cover stock for [[KOTEX®]] KOTEX pantiliners and obtainable from Sandler Corporation, Germany. Other examples of suitable materials are composite materials of a polymer and a nonwoven fabric material. The composite materials are typically in the form of integral sheets generally formed by the extrusion of a polymer onto a web of spunbond material. The fluid permeable cover (62) can also contain a plurality of apertures (not shown) formed therein which are intended to increase the rate at which bodily fluid(s) can penetrate into the absorbent (66).

The paragraph beginning at page 14, line 31:

In conducting their research, ~~the present inventors~~ it has been recognized that a significant number of women have different vestibule sizes, as well as different labia minora lengths and widths. For example, the human female labia minora length can range from about 20 to about 80 mm, or even longer depending on the female. Similarly, the human female labia minora width can range from about 4 to about 50 mm, again depending on the female. With such a broad variation in the genitalia of the human female, the present inventors realized the deficiencies of a single-sized labial pad intended for use by potential female wearers. The present inventors therefore believe that labial pads having a variety of lengths and widths are necessary to accommodate the variation in the human female genitalia. While conducting their research, however, the present inventors determined that the typical response of "scaling-up" a smaller labial pad to fit a human female with a larger vestibule or "scaling-down" a larger labial pad to fit a human female with a smaller vestibule, often would result in the labial pad either being too large and causing the female wearer discomfort and/or becoming dislodged, or being too small and not affording sufficient protection from leakage and/or failing to stay in place and thus becoming dislodged from the vestibule of a female wearer.

A7

The paragraph beginning at page 15, line 12:

In response to these findings, ~~the present inventors continued their~~ research has been continued and found that in addition to considering the length and width of a labial pad, the surface area of a labial pad also plays a significant role in enhancing the comfort and fit of a labial pad disposed within a female wearer's vestibule. As part of their research, the inventors

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determined that the effective surface area of the human female vestibule can be as small as about 275 mm^2, or even smaller depending on the female. In addition, the effective surface area of the human female vestibule can be as large as about 3,800 mm^2, or even larger depending on the female. Use of the phrase "effective surface area" with regard to a vestibule is intended to refer to that portion of the surface of the vestibule available for contact with absorbent articles similar to and including those described herein. Although there exists a great amount of variation in the effective surface area of the human female vestibule, the inventors determined that a significant number of human female vestibules have effective surface areas within the range of about 700 to about 3,100 mm^2. Believing that a single sized product would not effectively cover the entire range, the inventors established three ranges relative to the differing effective surface areas of female vestibules (42): from about 700 to about 1,700 mm^2; from about 1,700 to about 2,400 mm^2; and from about 2,400 to about 3,100 mm^2. Utilizing this information, the inventors found that by substantially matching the surface area of the upper surface of an absorbent (66) with the effective surface area of a female wearer's vestibule, the absorbent article demonstrates an improved efficacy at maintaining disposition within the vestibule (42) which results in the absorbent article providing better coverage of the vestibule (thus minimizing the potential for leakage) and enhanced comfort to the wearer. This is particularly significant when desiring to maintain disposition of the absorbent article within the vestibule of a female wearer absent the assistance of additional stay-in-place means such as, for example, strings, body adhesives, garment adhesives, belts, sanitary napkins, tampons, undergarments or the like.

AS CONT

The paragraph beginning at page 16, line 10:

Utilizing the results of ~~their~~ research, ~~the present inventors developed~~ specifically-dimensioned absorbent articles <u>have been developed and</u> configured for disposition within the vestibule of a female wearer and having a variety of geometries which allow the absorbent articles to maintain disposition within the vestibule of a female wearer absent the assistance of a stay-in-place means. Examples of these geometries include, but are not limited to, rectangle, ovoid, elliptical, trapezoid, circle, triangle, square, teardrop, diamond-shaped, butterfly, pear-shaped, heart-shaped or a variety of combinations thereof.

A9

Replace the Abstract with the rewritten Abstract set forth on the following separate page"